

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
December 17, 2003, 4:30 p.m. Council Chambers

PRESENT

Dave Clingan
Jay Myers
Gil Palmer
Chrystal Pushor
Dick Underdahl-Peirce
Madhu Vedak
Barbara Stevens

ABSENT

Joan Chelton
Cindy Felsten
Marie Schroeder

STAFF PRESENT: Director Arlette Tinsley, Deputy Director Lorraine Smith, Secretary Lula Young.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Commissioner Clingan moved to accept the minutes of the regular full commission meeting of October. Commissioner Myers seconded. Motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Deputy Director Smith reported a balance of \$3,936.32 in the Commission's donations account reflecting the fees paid for the Foundation For Youth field trips. Additional funds may be due dependent upon the total number of field trips actually completed.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:

Commissioner Palmer discussed the Mockingbird committee meetings he attended at I.U.P.U.C. Attendees were Director Tinsley, Lynne Sullivan, Paul Bippen, Jim Byrd, Nasser Paydar, Paul Jones and Harry McCawley. The community conversation has been set for Monday, January 19, 2004, from 5:15p.m. until 6:15p.m. The discussion will include the cancellation of To Kill a Mockingbird and beyond. The location will be room 143 on the I.U.P.U.C. campus.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2004 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: The 2004 goals and objectives were submitted by Director Tinsley to the commissioners for approval. Discussion included individual case completion goals on commission generated brochures. **Commissioner Myers moved to accept the Goals and Objectives. Commissioner Pushor seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

Director Tinsley informed the commissioners that Deputy Director Smith had accepted an invitation to join the Kidscommons board.

A 'Stop the Hate' rally has been organized by the Gay/Straight Alliance, The Peace Fellowship and the Unitarian Church for Sunday, December 21, 2003, to take place on the steps of City Hall. A local lesbian couple were the victims of vandalism when their home was spray-painted with slurs. The Human Rights office was contacted for assistance in filing a complaint regarding inadequate police response to this incident. Commissioner Underdahl-Peirce suggested we obtain preliminary information from the police department regarding hate-crime vandalism incidents to share.

Director Tinsley reported that mediation agreements for two (2) cases have been signed. Three cases are ongoing. Director Tinsley has contacted Indiana University to recruit law students to participate in the mediation process of these cases.

FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION:

SELECTION OF A NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER: Upon the resignation of Commissioner Bryant, the treasurer's position is currently vacant. In compliance with policy 3.b.6 of the Rules and Regulations, the vacancy will be filled by an action of the commission. **Commissioner Underdahl-Peirce nominated Commissioner Jay Myers to be appointed Treasurer. Commissioner Vedak seconded. Commissioners voted unanimously to appoint Commissioner Myers to the Executive Committee as Treasurer.**

Absentee Voting/E-meeting/Quorum For Regular Commission Meetings: After being approached by Commissioner Palmer with an inquiry regarding the utilization of absentee votes and whether they can be utilized by the Commission, Director Tinsley and Deputy Director Smith researched the topic. After consulting with City Clerk Treasurer John Baughn and researching information on Roberts Rules of Order, Director Tinsley shared the information obtained. Director Tinsley presented to the Commissioners for their perusal, draft language reflecting changes in the rules and regulations regarding absentee voting and e-meetings. Commissioner Underdahl-Peirce questioned the wording, 'the chairperson shall vote. . .', and suggested changing 'shall' to 'may'. Director Tinsley stated that it was up to the board, but her recommendation would be to pass revised language on e-meetings for the executive meetings. She is neutral on the absentee voting. After discussion, **a motion was made by Commissioner Underdahl-Peirce to move forward in January with the public hearing on e-meetings for the executive committee. Commissioner Clingan seconded, motion passed.**

Then commissioners continued discussion on the issue of absentee voting. Commissioner Palmer reminded commissioners of a previous vote that resulted in an impasse because an absentee vote had not been allowed. Concern was voiced by Commissioner Myers that the absentee voter would miss the additional discussion and information that may impact their vote. After discussion, **Commissioner Myers moved to have a public hearing on absentee voting to propose rules and regulations on absentee voting. Commissioner Clingan seconded. Five (5) commissioners voted in favor of the motion, two (2) opposed. Motion passed.**

Director Tinsley discussed with commissioners whether they wanted to include language on the issue of quorums. She stated that the Commission's current rules and regulations do not include an official rule of what constitutes a quorum in a regular commission meeting. She explained that the Commission utilizes the ordinance's rules on conducting a hearing. **Commissioner Clingan moved that the commission should address and clarify what a quorum will be for a regular commission meeting; clarifying what a simple majority is for a quorum. Commissioner Myers seconded, motion passed.**

ANNUAL DINNER/ESSAY CONTEST:

Director Tinsley informed commissioners that essay contest packets were delivered by Pat Bryant, and are in the schools. She questioned the need to move on with the next speaker. A letter will be sent to Dr. Cornell West. If no response is received within a month, we will move on to the next speaker on the list.

A pregnancy discrimination case was accepted against Holiday Inn involving the sales management staff. The company did not agree to mediation and they have submitted evidentiary documents for the case.

Commissioner Myers and secretary Young are compiling information on alternative locations to the Holiday Inn for the annual dinner.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Vedak advised that Columbus has been accepted as one of twenty-five cities by the World Parliament of Religions to be a partner with four cities. Columbus was the smallest city accepted. The recent conference topic included the impact of diversity and migration.

ADJOURN:

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned.